

CLOSE-UP REPORT

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 1989

Commercially extinct? That means that, if the killing of African elephants doesn't stop now, in five years, there won't be enough elephants left in the world to kill to supply the ivory trade. In the next ten years, on the eve of the twenty-first century, the African elephant could disappear from the face of the earth—forever.

The memory of the world's largest, most magnificent land mammal will live on, however—in women's jewelry boxes and in the display cabinets of art collectors.

Although only an estimated four hundred thousand elephants remain—down from 1.3 million nine years ago—as many as three hundred elephants are slaughtered every day in Africa. They are killed for their ivory tusks, which are traded on the international market, and worked into bracelets, earrings, and statues for consumers in the United States, Europe,

“At the present rate [of killing], the African elephant will be commercially extinct in five years.”

—Determination made at the December 1988 meeting of the African Elephant Working Group of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

REMEMBER THE ELEPHANTS... FORGET IVORY



increasing rarity of the ivory product. In a number of countries, corrupt military and government officials have been implicated in the illegal trade.

It is now impossible to ensure that tusks marked as having been legally obtained were indeed taken under the quota system. It is even harder to determine the true origin of worked ivory. More than 90 percent of the ivory entering the United States comes in as jewelry and carvings from Hong Kong. Importers in Asia buy raw ivory from Africa, often with no regard to where it came from or how it was obtained.

Scientists in the African Elephant and Rhino Specialist Group of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources estimate that, in 1986, the first year of the quota system, 78 percent of all ivory marketed worldwide was poached ivory

traded completely outside the CITES system.

The ivory traded in that year represented the tusks of approximately 89,000 elephants. To this day, the vast extermination continues unabated.

CONSUMERS ARE TO BLAME

Who is really to blame for the elephants' destruction? Is it the African villager who is paid to kill an elephant? Is it the wealthy Asian trader who imports raw ivory into Hong Kong and exports carved trinkets to Japan and the West?

The guiltiest party is, in fact, the consumer at the end of the line. When people stop buying ivory, there will be no market for it, and the killing of elephants for their ivory will stop.

People can live without ivory. Elephants can't.

WHAT THE HSUS IS DOING

The HSUS has spearheaded

The remains of a massacred elephant family rot in the sun. Ivory hunters machine-gun the animals and then hack their faces apart with machetes to get the tusks (photo above). Elephants survived the last Ice Age, but they may not survive the affluent shopper. Ivory carvings and jewelry can still be purchased at many American stores (photo below).

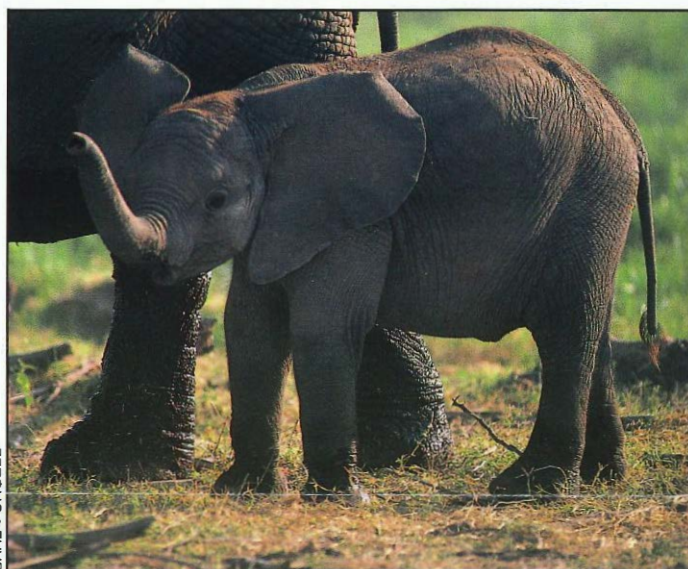


HSUS/TILTON

several approaches to the elephant problem. First, we filed a formal petition with the United States Department of the Interior in February to reclassify the African elephant from its current listing as a threatened species to that of an endangered species. Already, the government has accepted the petition and has launched a full status review of the African elephant.

Americans now have until mid-August to let their government know whether they want to save the African elephant. Reclassification to endangered status would mean an immediate end to all commercial trade in ivory and elephant products in the United States.

Also, at the urging of The HSUS, the United States government joined the governments of Tanzania, Kenya, and five other nations in proposing that the African elephant be listed on Appendix I of CITES. The species is currently listed on Appendix II, which means that trade in products made from the



Elephant babies orphaned by the ivory trade often end up at zoos and circuses where, chained and "broken" by often brutal trainers, they succumb to human domination.

species is regulated. An Appendix I listing would mean that the species is in danger of extinction, and all commercial trade would be banned.

The Appendix I proposal will

be considered in October at the biennial meeting of the Conference of the Parties of CITES. The ultimate fate of the African elephant will then be in the hands of the 102 CITES nations.

The HSUS, however, recognizes that the African elephant cannot wait months or years for more protective laws and regulations to be adopted and enforced. Through a massive publicity and education campaign, The HSUS is asking every American to boycott all ivory products *now*.

To that end, The HSUS is placing print and radio public-service announcements directed at the general public, and buying magazine ads directed at art collectors and ivory jewelry merchandisers. In addition, we have purchased displays in strategic areas of New York's John F. Kennedy Airport in an attempt to reach world travelers.

The ivory trade must be destroyed or the elephants will be destroyed.

How could we live in the world without elephants? Imagine it. Would you want to live in such a world? ■


**URGENT
ALERT**


Our work is finally paying off! As a result of pressure from The HSUS and other animal-protection organizations, President Bush has just announced a ban on ivory imports into the United States. But, while this is an important step forward, the president's action is not enough to save the African elephant. Commerce in ivory products (which encourages poaching, illegal trade, and sport hunting for "trophies") will continue, and the ban can be lifted at any time.


The African elephant must be listed as an endangered species and on Appendix I of the CITES treaty, *now*! Only this—plus heavy diplomatic pressure on countries to ban the ivory trade worldwide—will save these animals.


The situation is moving quickly and is now in the crisis stage. Momentum is building. Please help! Mail the enclosed postcards as soon as possible and follow our recommended actions in "We Need Your Help" (see box, right). The elephants need you *now*.


**WE NEED
YOUR HELP**


 Sign and mail the enclosed postcards as soon as possible. Let the United States government know that you want the African elephant listed immediately as an endangered species and that diplomatic pressure to end the ivory trade must be exerted.

 Order more postcard sets and have as many sent out as you can. Officials at the agencies we are trying to influence pay attention to numbers.

 Don't buy or wear ivory! Buying or wearing ivory trinkets, no matter how small, encourages the slaughter of elephants. Don't do it!

 Let stores in your area know that you are adamantly opposed to the sale of ivory products. Let sales executives know that you will not patronize their establishments so long as their business contributes to the slaughter of elephants. (Contact mail-order houses, too.) A contracting market will signal the government that there is a diminishing commercial stake in any kind of official sanctioning of the ivory trade, and that the public wants protection for elephants.

 Help publicize the elephants' plight. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Order reprints of this *Close-Up Report* and send them to all who need enlightening. Purchase our new "Remember the Elephants...Forget Ivory!" bumper sticker and place it on your car.

 Finally, help The HSUS continue its work to save the elephants—and all animals—who suffer at the hands of humankind. Please use the enclosed postage-paid envelope to send your contribution today.

